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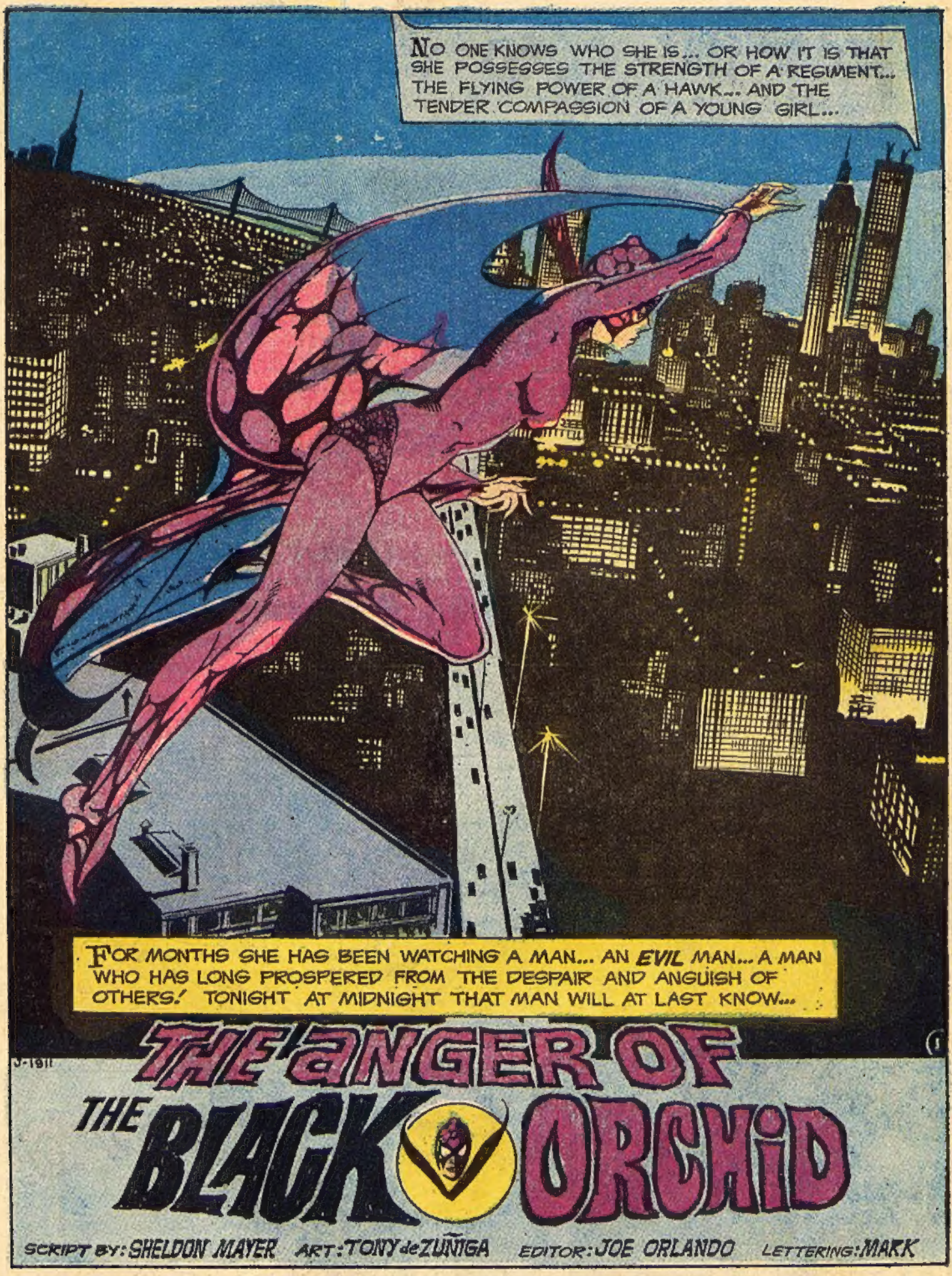
NO ONE KNOWS WHO SHE IS... OR HOW IT IS THAT SHE POSSESSES THE STRENGTH OF A REGIMENT... THE FLYING POWER OF A HAWK... AND THE TENDER COMPASSION OF A YOUNG GIRL...
FOR MONTHS SHE HAS BEEN WATCHING A MAN... AN EVIL MAN... A MAN WHO HAS LONG PROSPERED FROM THE DESPAIR AND ANGUISH OF OTHERS! TONIGHT AT MIDNIGHT THAT MAN WILL AT LAST KNOW...
J-1911
THE ANGER OF THE BLACK ORCHID
SCRIPT BY: SHELDON MAYER ART: TONY deZUÑIGA EDITOR: JOE ORLANDO LETTERING: MARK

ADVENTURE COMICS, Vol. 39, No. 430, Nov.-Dec., 1973. Published bi-monthly by NATIONAL PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS, INC., 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10019 Carmine Infantino, Publisher, Joe Orlando, Editor. E. Nelson Bridwell, Assistant Editor. Sol Harrison, Production Manager. Second Class Postage paid at New York, N.Y. and additional mailing offices. Advertising Representative, Sanford Schwarz & Co., Inc., 16 West 46th Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. Copyright © 1973 by National Periodical Publications, Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. No actual persons, living or dead, are intended or should be inferred. Printed in U.S.A.

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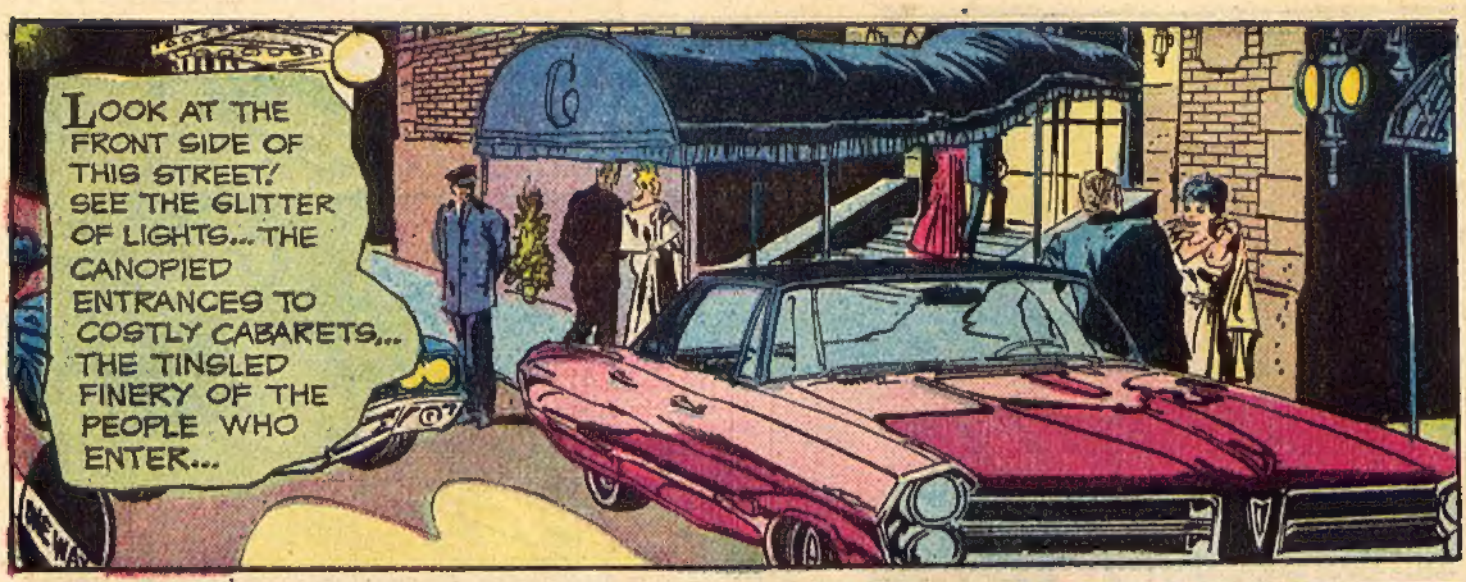
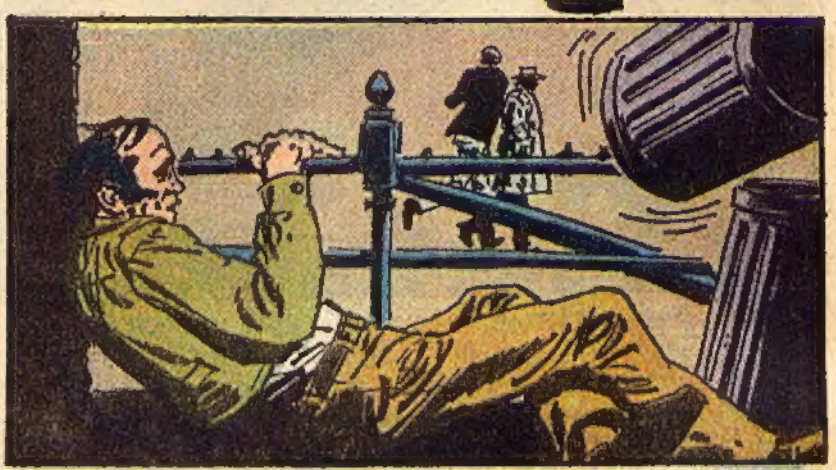

LOOK AT THE FRONT SIDE OF THIS STREET! SEE THE GLITTER OF LIGHTS... THE CANOPIED ENTRANCES TO COSTLY CABARETS... THE TINSLED FINERY OF THE PEOPLE WHO ENTER...

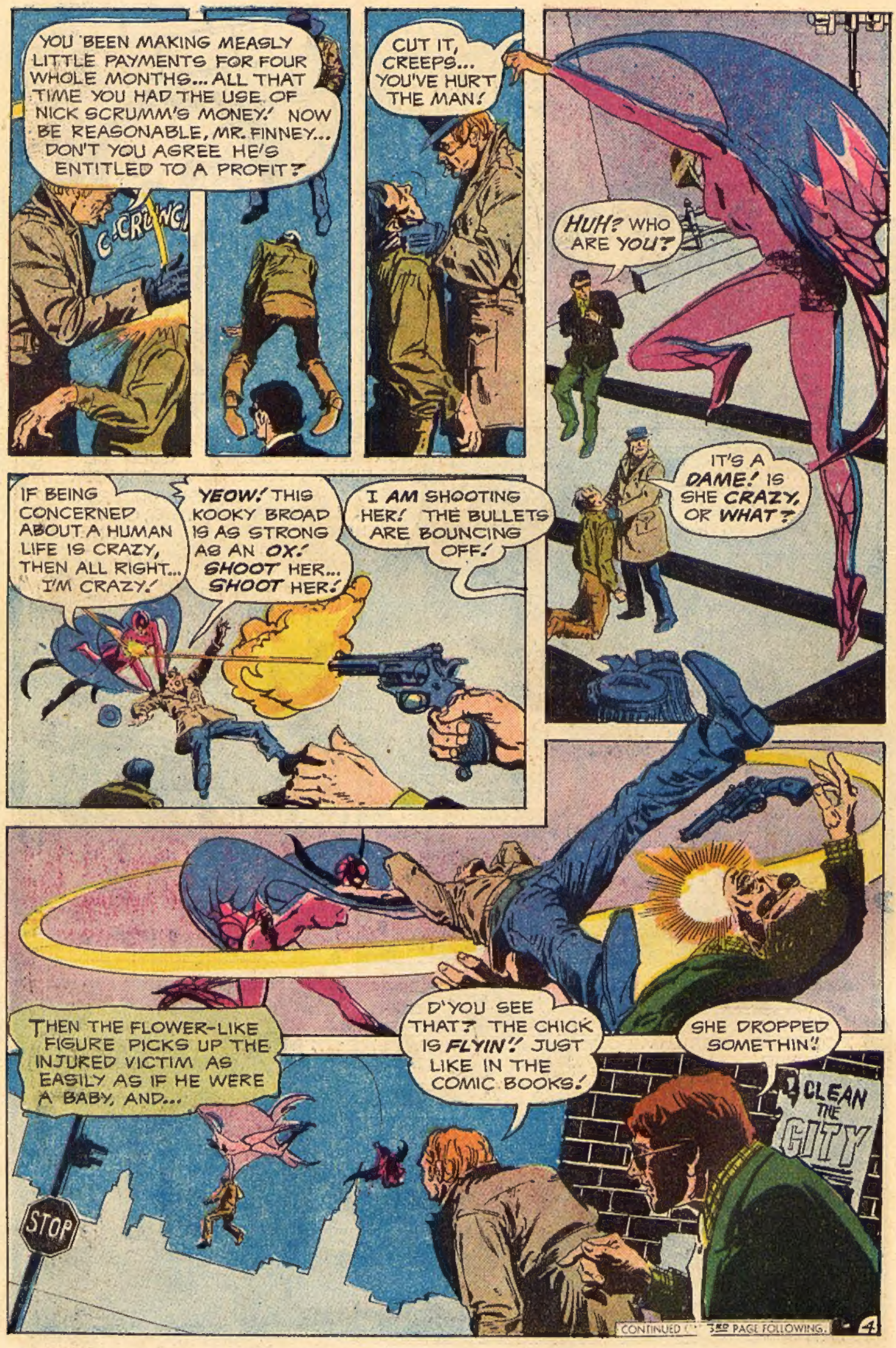
NOW LOOK AT THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT SAME STREET... THE BACK ALLEY SIDE, THE SIDE THAT SHOWS INDIGNITY AND SQUALOR...
STOP
HE'S GETTING AWAY! STOP HIM!

DON'T WORRY, NICK... HE WON'T GET FAR!
YEAH... WE'LL HANDLE IT, NICK! LEAVE IT TO US!



CLAANG!
HA!
2

THERE HE IS!
DON'T HURRY! WE GOT TIME! HE AIN'T GOIN' NOWHERE!
ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! GO AHEAD! KILL ME! GET IT OVER WITH!
YEAH, WE GONNA DO THAT, MR. FINNEY... BUT FIRST WE GOTTA MARK YOU UP SOME MORE!
WHEN YOU WELSH ON NICKY SCRUMM IN PUBLIC, MR. FINNEY, YOUR BODY HAS GOTTA BE A LESSON TO OTHER PEOPLE WHO OWE HIM MONEY..!
OTHERWISE, EVERYBODY WOULD BE WELSHING! YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THAT, CAN'TCHA, MR. FINNEY?
WHACK
BUT I DIDN'T WELSH! I OWED MR. SCRUMM FOUR HUNDRED DOLLARS AND I GAVE HIM FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS! NOW HE SAYS I OWE HIM A THOUSAND!
YOU'RE FORGETTING THE INTEREST, MR. FINNEY!
GIVE HIM ANOTHER ONE, SLIT... MAKE HIM UNDERSTAND!
3


YOU 'BEEN MAKING MEASLY LITTLE PAYMENTS FOR FOUR WHOLE MONTHS... ALL THAT TIME YOU HAD THE USE OF NICK SCRUMM'S MONEY! NOW BE REASONABLE, MR. FINNEY... DON'T YOU AGREE HE'S ENTITLED TO A PROFIT?
CRUNCH
CUT IT, CREEPS... YOU'VE HURT THE MAN!
HUH? WHO ARE YOU?
IT'S A DAME! IS SHE CRAZY, OR WHAT?
IF BEING CONCERNED ABOUT A HUMAN LIFE IS CRAZY, THEN ALL RIGHT... I'M CRAZY!
YEOW! THIS KOOKY BROAD IS AS STRONG AS AN OX! SHOOT HER... SHOOT HER!
I AM SHOOTING HER! THE BULLETS ARE BOUNCING OFF!
THEN THE FLOWER-LIKE FIGURE PICKS UP THE INJURED VICTIM AS EASILY AS IF HE WERE A BABY, AND...
D'YOU SEE THAT? THE CHICK IS FLYIN'! JUST LIKE IN THE COMIC BOOKS!
SHE DROPPED SOMETHIN'!
CLEAN THE CITY
STOP
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING.
4

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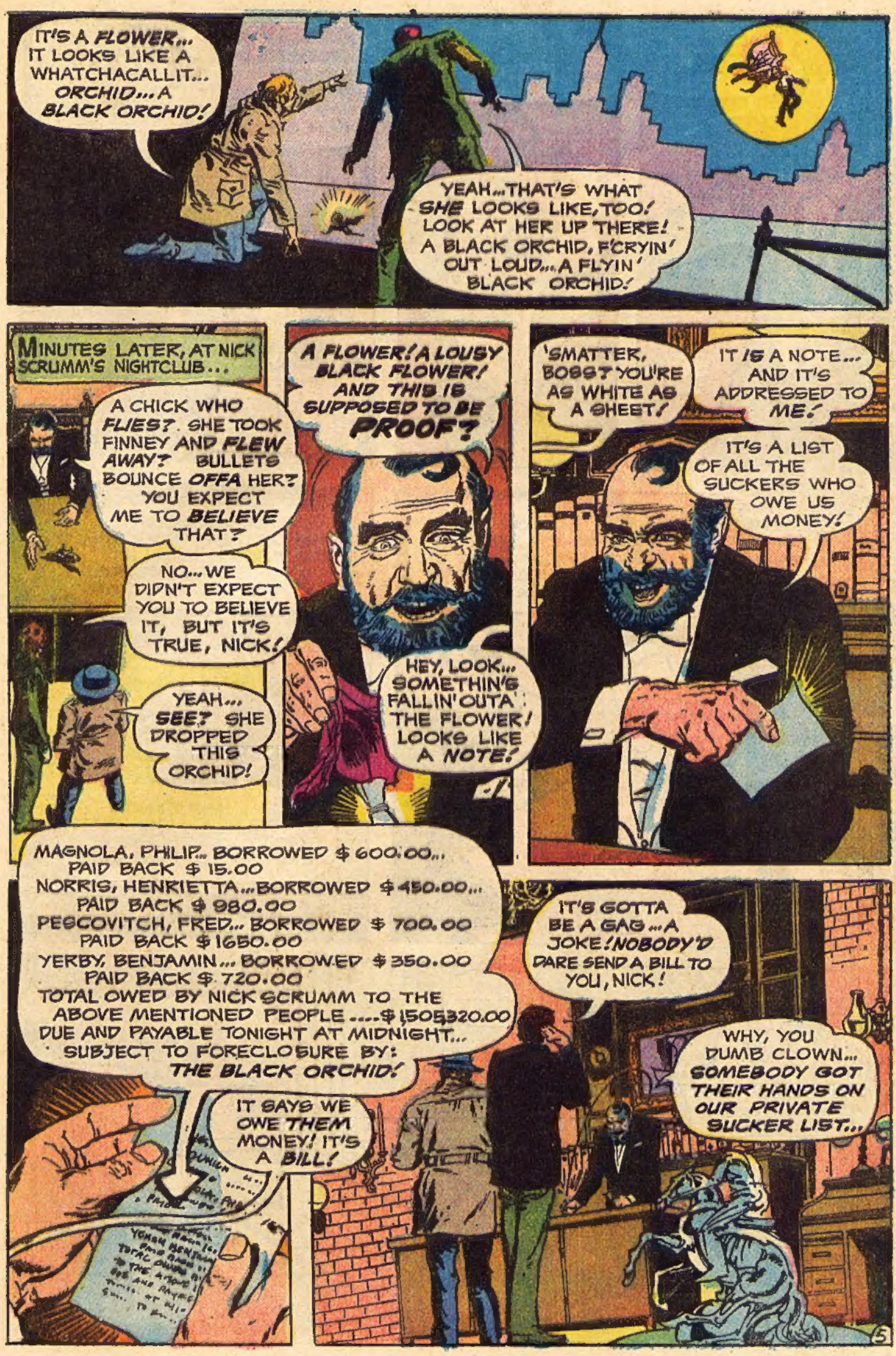
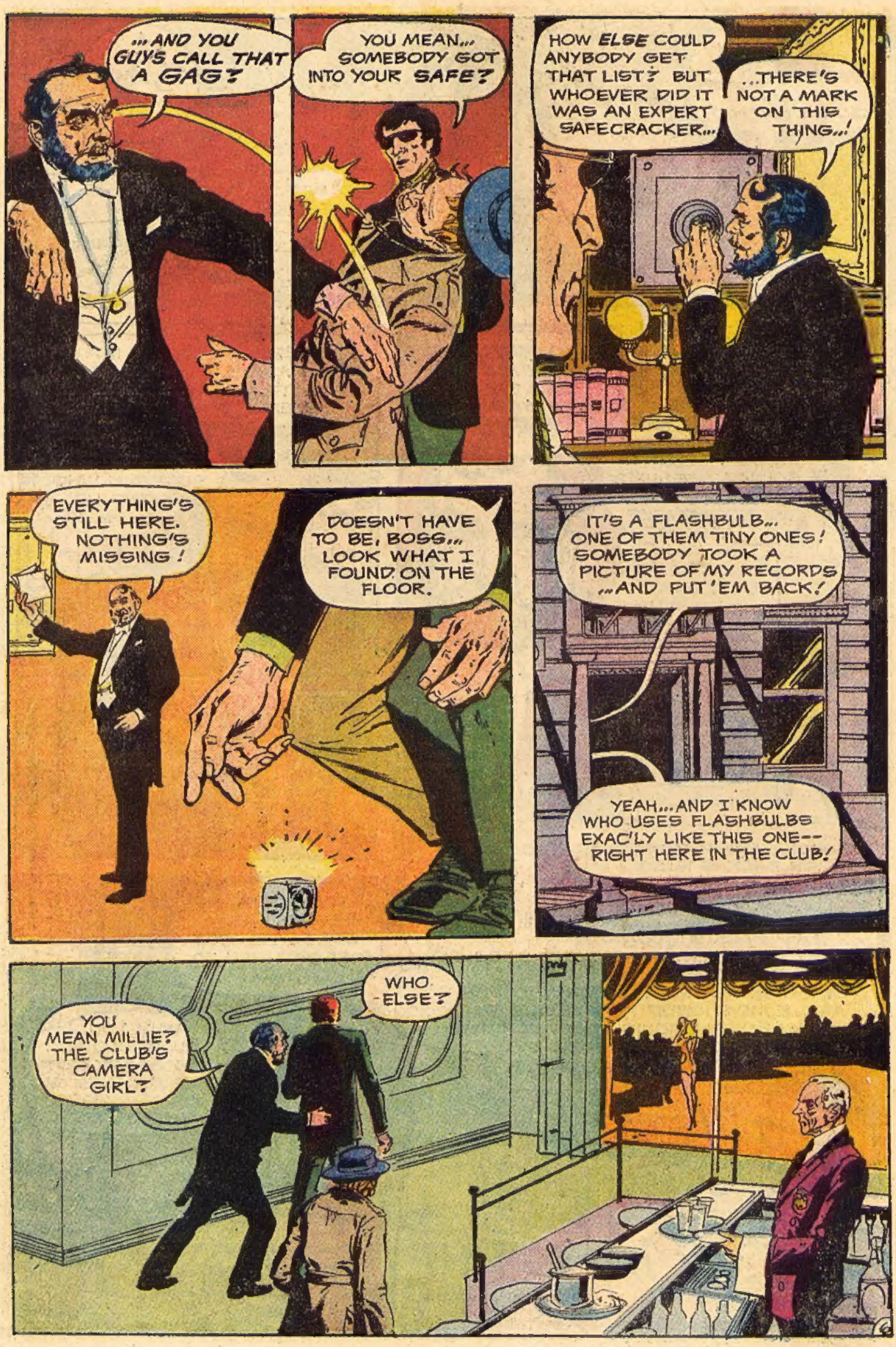

IT'S A FLOWER... IT LOOKS LIKE A WHATCHACALLIT... ORCHID... A BLACK ORCHID!
YEAH... THAT'S WHAT SHE LOOKS LIKE, TOO! LOOK AT HER UP THERE! A BLACK ORCHID, F'CRYIN' OUT LOUD... A FLYIN' BLACK ORCHID!
MINUTES LATER, AT NICK SCRUMM'S NIGHTCLUB...
A CHICK WHO FLIES? SHE TOOK FINNEY AND FLEW AWAY? BULLETS BOUNCE OFFA HER? YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT?
NO... WE DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO BELIEVE IT, BUT IT'S TRUE, NICK!
YEAH... SEE? SHE DROPPED THIS ORCHID!
A FLOWER! A LOUSY BLACK FLOWER! AND THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE PROOF?
HEY, LOOK... SOMETHIN'S FALLIN' OUTA THE FLOWER! LOOKS LIKE A NOTE!
'SMATTER, BOSS? YOU'RE AS WHITE AS A SHEET!
IT IS A NOTE... AND IT'S ADDRESSED TO ME!
IT'S A LIST OF ALL THE SUCKERS WHO OWE US MONEY!
MAGNOLA, PHILIP... BORROWED $600.00... PAID BACK $15.00
NORRIS, HENRIETTA... BORROWED $450.00... PAID BACK $980.00
PESCOVITCH, FRED... BORROWED $700.00 PAID BACK $1650.00
YERBY, BENJAMIN... BORROWED $350.00 PAID BACK $720.00
TOTAL OWED BY NICK SCRUMM TO THE ABOVE MENTIONED PEOPLE....$1505320.00
DUE AND PAYABLE TONIGHT AT MIDNIGHT...
SUBJECT TO FORECLOSURE BY: THE BLACK ORCHID!
IT'S GOTTA BE A GAG... A JOKE! NOBODY'D DARE SEND A BILL TO YOU, NICK!
IT SAYS WE OWE THEM MONEY! IT'S A BILL!
WHY, YOU DUMB CLOWN... SOMEBODY GOT THEIR HANDS ON OUR PRIVATE SUCKER LIST...
5


...AND YOU GUYS CALL THAT A GAG?
YOU MEAN... SOMEBODY GOT INTO YOUR SAFE?
HOW ELSE COULD ANYBODY GET THAT LIST? BUT WHOEVER DID IT WAS AN EXPERT SAFECRACKER...
...THERE'S NOT A MARK ON THIS THING...!
EVERYTHING'S STILL HERE. NOTHING'S MISSING!
DOESN'T HAVE TO BE, BOSS... LOOK WHAT I FOUND ON THE FLOOR.
IT'S A FLASHBULB... ONE OF THEM TINY ONES! SOMEBODY TOOK A PICTURE OF MY RECORDS ...AND PUT 'EM BACK!
YEAH... AND I KNOW WHO USES FLASHBULBS EXAC'LY LIKE THIS ONE-- RIGHT HERE IN THE CLUB!
YOU MEAN MILLIE? THE CLUB'S CAMERA GIRL?
WHO ELSE?

MILLIE, C'MERE A MINUTE! HEY, YOU'RE NOT MILLIE!
NO, SIR! I'M SUSAN... MILLIE HADDA GO HOME EARLY! SHE DIDN'T THINK YOU'D MIND IF I COVERED FOR HER! I'M A GOOD PHOTOGRAPHER!
SO THAT EXPLAINS YOUR "BLACK ORCHID" CHARACTER! IT'S MILLIE! SHE AIN'T HERE T'NIGHT, RIGHT? SHE TOOK THE PICTURES OF MY RECORDS, RIGHT? FIND HER!
RIGHT, NICK! I GOT HER HOME ADDRESS! I'LL START LOOKIN' THERE!
LISTEN, SLIT... BETTER SEND OUT A FEW OF THE BOYS TO SEE THE SLOBS ON THIS SUCKER-LIST! THEY MAY BE ASKED TO TESTIFY AGAINST US! WORK 'EM OVER... REMIND 'EM WHO'S BOSS!
WHAT'S THAT, BOSS? CAN'T HEAR YOU... THE BAND...
...AND NOW, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, OUR STAR ATTRACTION! MADEMOISELLE MAGIQUE, THE AMAZING HYPNOTIST!
OH... IT'S THE INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW ACT! WAIT... I WANNA SEE THIS!
GOOD EVENING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! TONIGHT I WEEL DEMONSTRATE A KIND OF HYPNOTISM NEVAIR BEFORE SEEN ON ANY STAGE! EEF I COULD 'AVE A VOLUNTEER? YOU, M'SIEU! COULD YOU?
ME? I'M NOT A CUSTOMER!
I'M THE BOSS!

ZAT EES ALL RIGHT... I AM NOT, HOW YOU SAY...? PROUD!
HUH?
WHAT DO YOU SAY, FOLKS? DOES THE BOSS DESAIRVE A BEEG HAND? HEIN?
HUH? Y-YOU'RE FLYING! PUT ME D-DOWN!
AMAZING!
HAHA! LOOK! SHE'S FLYING THROUGH THE AIR! HAHA! LOOK AT SCRUMM'S FACE!
NOW, LADEEZ AN' GENTLEMEN... DEED YOU NOT SEE ZAT? COULD YOU TELL ME WHAT M'SIEU SCRUMM AN' I JUST DEED BEFORE YOUR EYES? COME... SPEAK UP!
YOU FLEW THROUGH THE AIR!
YOU PICKED UP SCRUMM AND FLEW HIM TO THE STAGE!
YEAH! FANTASTIC!
WRONG! WE DEED NOT FLY! ZEE WHOLE THEENG WAS AN EELLUSION! YOU WERE ALL UNDER HYPNOSIS! YOU THOUGHT YOU SAW US FLY... BUT EEN REALITY, WE WALKED UP HERE TO ZE STAGE!
WE DID?
HUH?

NOW, M'SIEU SCRUMM, COULD I HAVE, PLEASE, YOUR HANDKERCHIEF?
YEAH, SURE! HERE...
I SAID A HANDKERCHIEF, M'SIEU... NOT A BLACK ORCHID!
HUH? BUT IT WAS IN MY HANDKERCHIEF POCKET!
HA HAHAHAHA
ALORS, M'SIEU SCRUMM... YOU ARE FULL OF SURPRISES! THEES BLACK ORCHID... EET EES NOT A BLACK ORCHID EITHER! WHEN I PRESS THEES PETAL, EET SPEAKS! EET EES A TINY TAPE-RECORDER! LEESTEN!
CLICK
I DON'T HEAR NOTHIN'!
I WEEL HOLD EET CLOSAIR TO ZE MICROPHONE ...ATTENDEZ!
NICK SCRUMM! YOU OWE A TOTAL OF $1,505,320.00! YOU HAVE UNTIL MIDNIGHT TO PAY IT BACK!
IF IT IS NOT PAID BY THAT TIME... THE BLACK ORCHID WILL FORECLOSE!
WHY, YOU LITTLE... SO YOU'RE THAT CRAZY BLACK ORCHID DAME! I'LL...
SUDDENLY...
HUH?
HEY! WHO TURNED OUT THE LIGHTS? TURN 'EM BACK ON!
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

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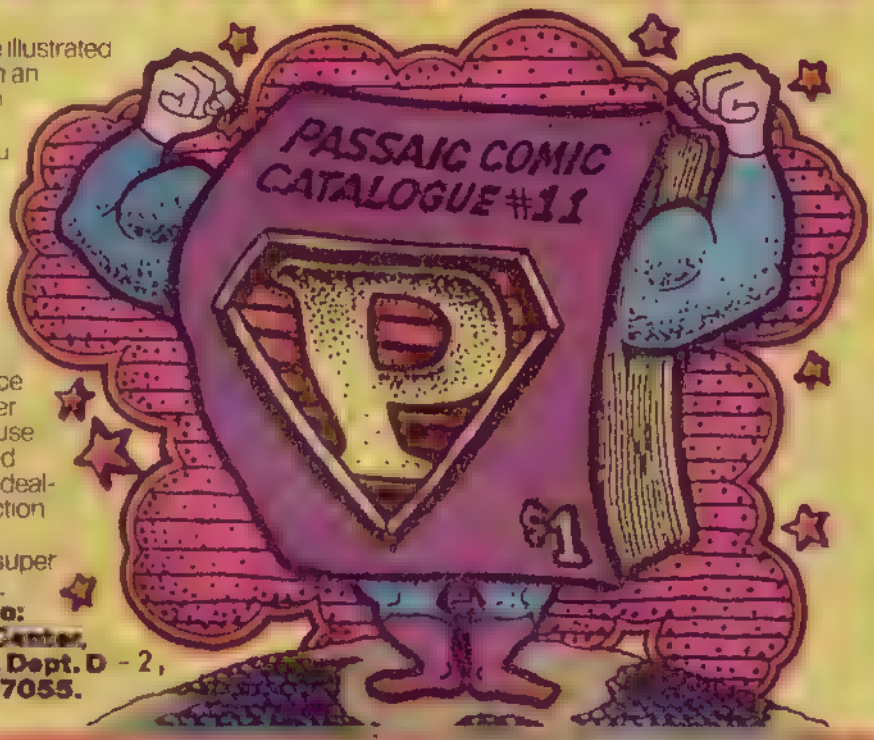

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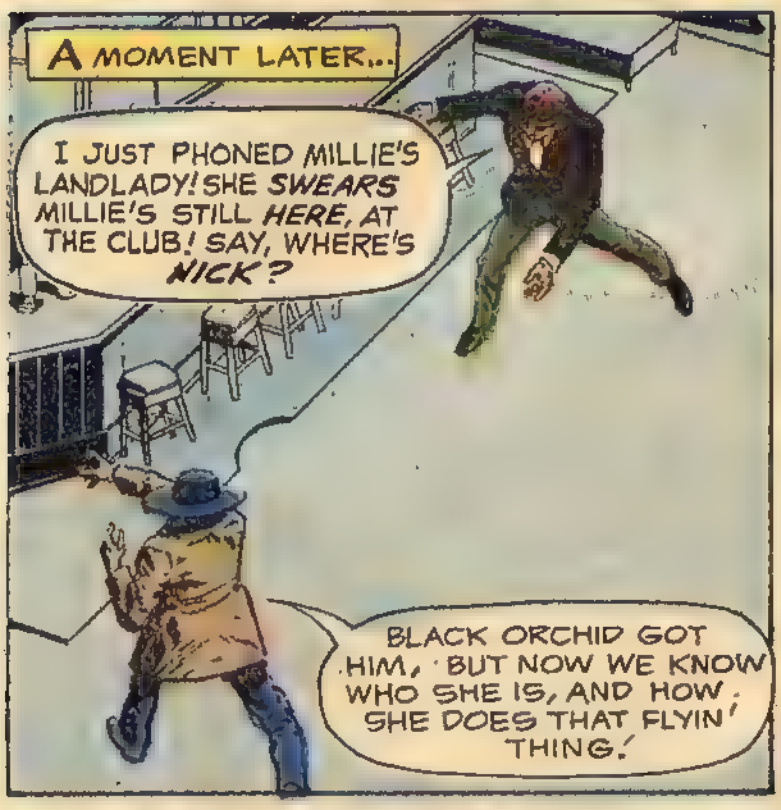
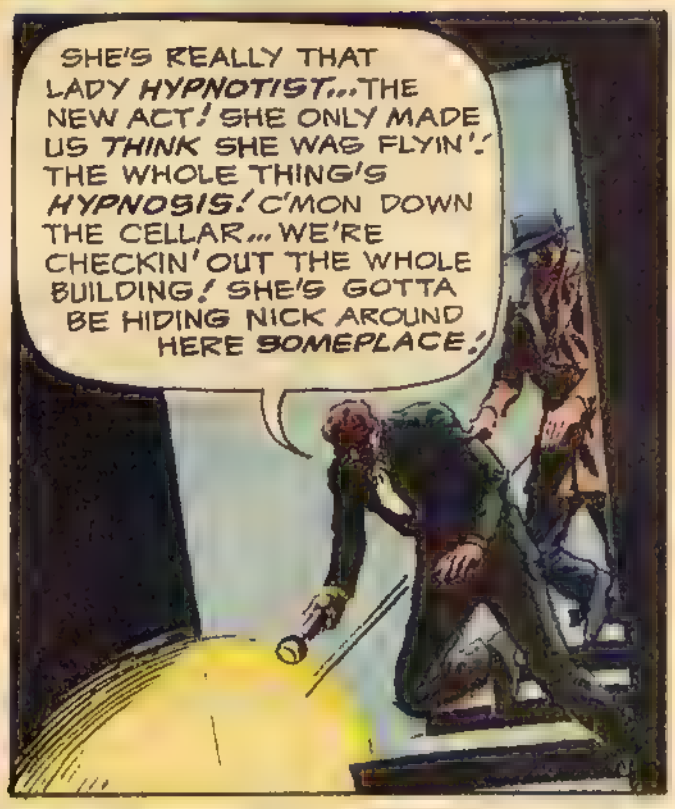
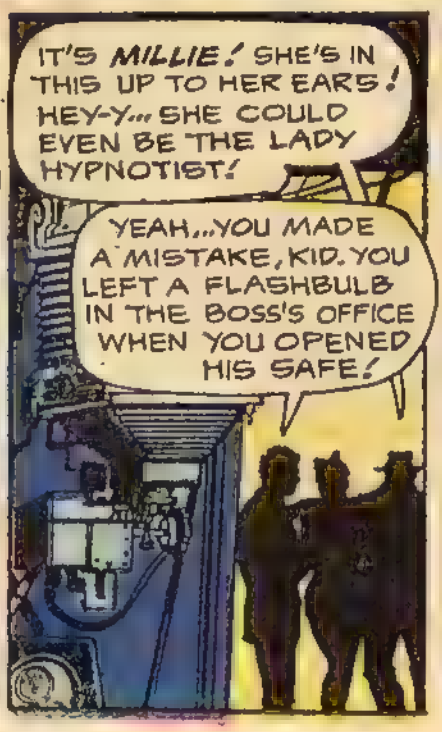
AT THAT MOMENT, AN ODD COUPLE FLIES OUT OF THE REAR EXIT...
HEY, LEMME GO, DAMMIT! LEGGO!
I MAY JUST DO THAT, BUT NOT UNTIL WE GET TO A HIGHER ALTITUDE!


A MOMENT LATER...
I JUST PHONED MILLIE'S LANDLADY! SHE SWEARS MILLIE'S STILL HERE, AT THE CLUB! SAY, WHERE'S NICK?
BLACK ORCHID GOT HIM, BUT NOW WE KNOW WHO SHE IS, AND HOW SHE DOES THAT FLYIN' THING!

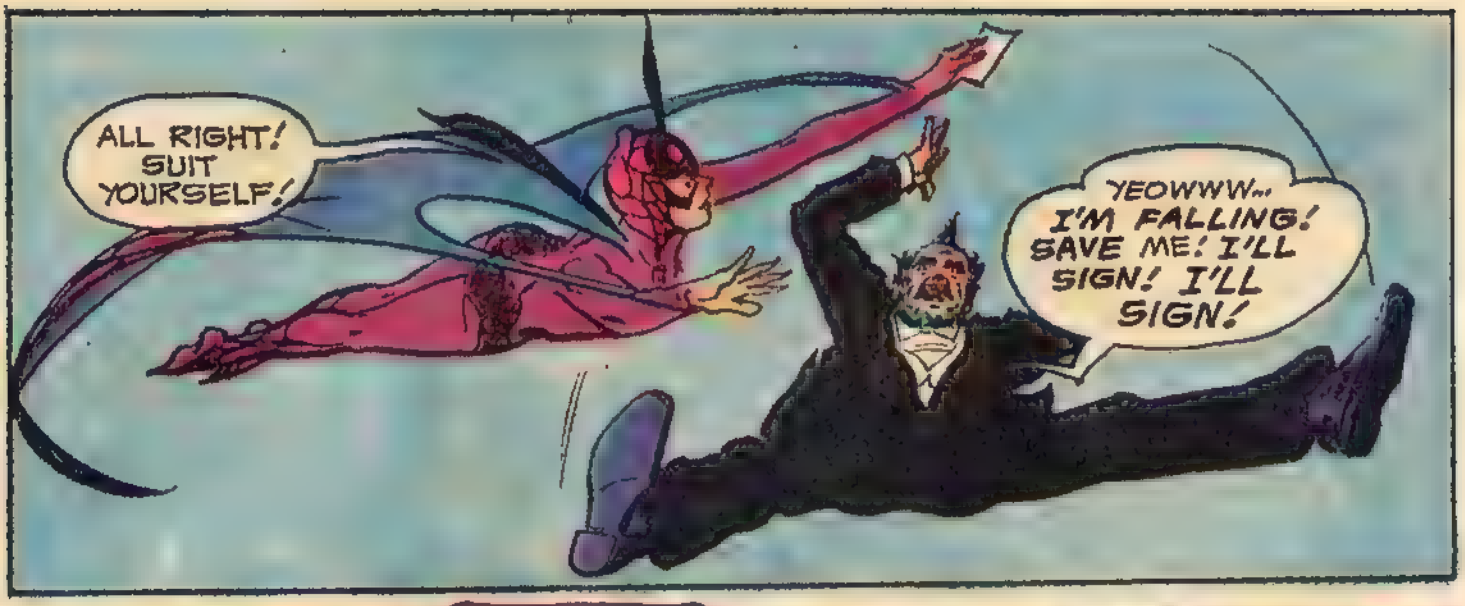

SHE'S REALLY THAT LADY HYPNOTIST... THE NEW ACT! SHE ONLY MADE US THINK SHE WAS FLYIN'! THE WHOLE THING'S HYPNOSIS! C'MON DOWN THE CELLAR... WE'RE CHECKIN' OUT THE WHOLE BUILDING! SHE'S GOTTA BE HIDING NICK AROUND HERE SOMEPLACE!

AHA! LOOK! THERE'S SOMEBODY IN HERE!
TURN OFF THAT FLASHLIGHT, STUPID! THIS IS A DARKROOM!

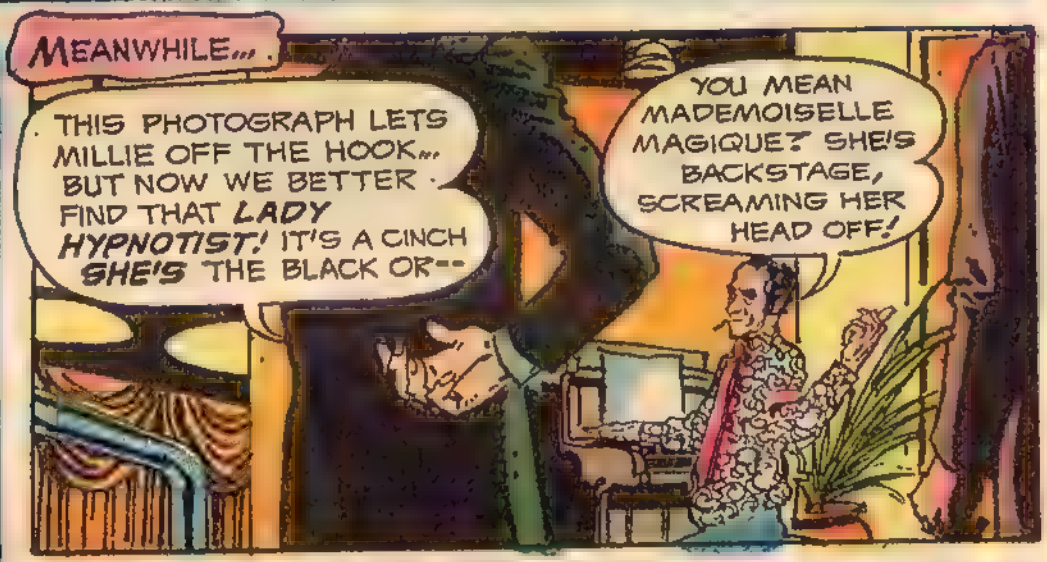

IT'S MILLIE! SHE'S IN THIS UP TO HER EARS! HEY-Y... SHE COULD EVEN BE THE LADY HYPNOTIST!
YEAH... YOU MADE A MISTAKE, KID. YOU LEFT A FLASHBULB IN THE BOSS'S OFFICE WHEN YOU OPENED HIS SAFE!

OH, LEGGO MY ARM, STUPID! I DIDN'T OPEN NO SAFE!

SURE I LEFT A FLASHBULB IN NICK'S OFFICE... WHEN I TOOK THIS PICTURE YESTERDAY! REMEMBER? YOU WERE THERE, TOO!
HEY-Y... YEAH... SHE'S RIGHT!
MEANWHILE, THE GIRL KNOWN AS THE BLACK ORCHID SOARS HIGH ABOVE THE CITY WITH HER FRIGHTENED PASSENGER...
NO! NO! DON'T LET GO NOW! H-HOLD M-ME T-TIGHT!
THAT DEPENDS ON YOU, MR. SCRUMM!
THIS IS A CHECK MADE OUT TO YOUR VICTIMS FOR THE AMOUNT YOU EXTORTED FROM THEM! ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS SIGN IT!
ARE YOU CRAZY? THAT'S OVER A MILLION DOLLARS! I HAVEN'T GOT THAT KIND OF MONEY!
PERHAPS NOT IN THIS COUNTRY... BUT LOOK AT THE CHECK... IT'S DRAWN ON THE SWISS BANK WHERE YOU DO HAVE THAT KIND OF MONEY!
NO! NO! THAT'S MY MONEY! NOBODY TAKES IT AWAY FROM ME! NOBODY!


ALL RIGHT! SUIT YOURSELF!
YEOWWW... I'M FALLING! SAVE ME! I'LL SIGN! I'LL SIGN!

THAT'S BETTER! HERE'S A PEN!


MEANWHILE...
THIS PHOTOGRAPH LETS MILLIE OFF THE HOOK... BUT NOW WE BETTER FIND THAT LADY HYPNOTIST! IT'S A CINCH SHE'S THE BLACK OR--
YOU MEAN MADEMOISELLE MAGIQUE? SHE'S BACKSTAGE, SCREAMING HER HEAD OFF!

I QUEET! THEES EES CRAZY PLACE TO WORK! SOMEBODEE HALP ME WEETH MY APPARATUS!
HOLD IT, LADY! WHAT'S THIS APPARATUB YOU'RE TALKIN' ABOUT?
CONTINUED ON 4TH PAGE FOLLOWING.
12

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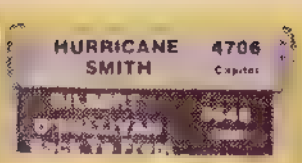

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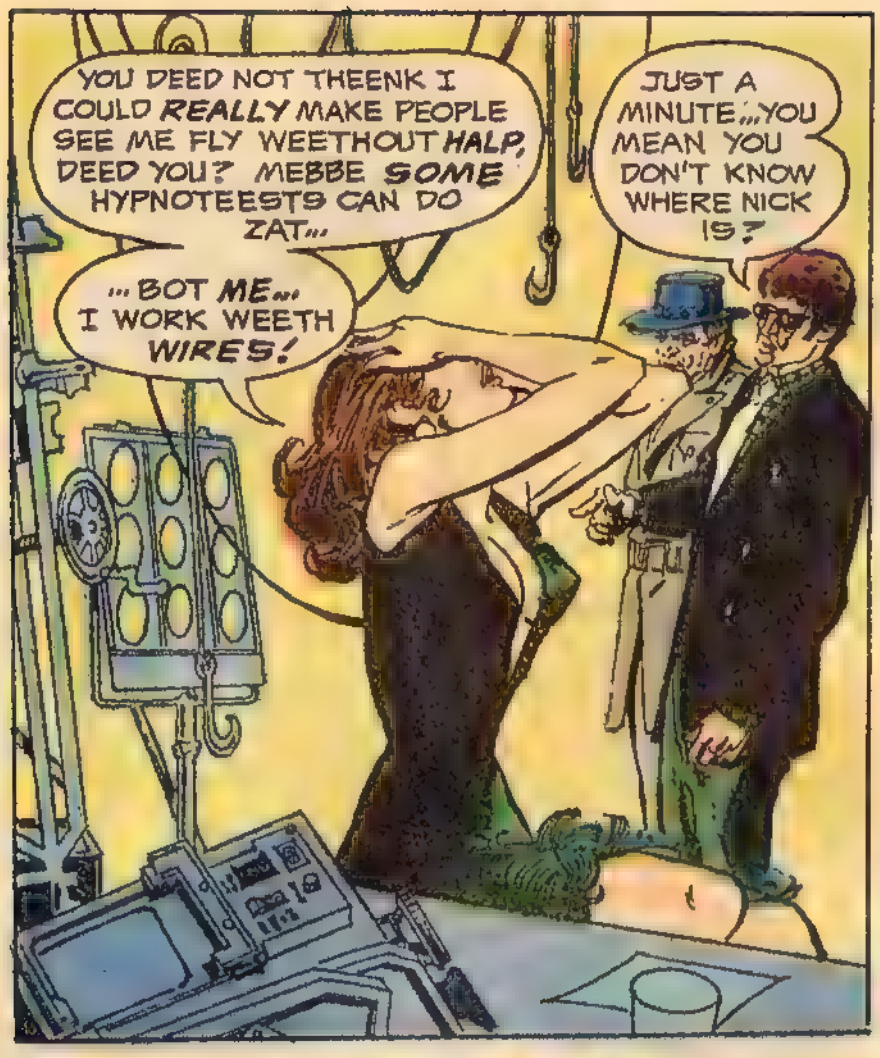
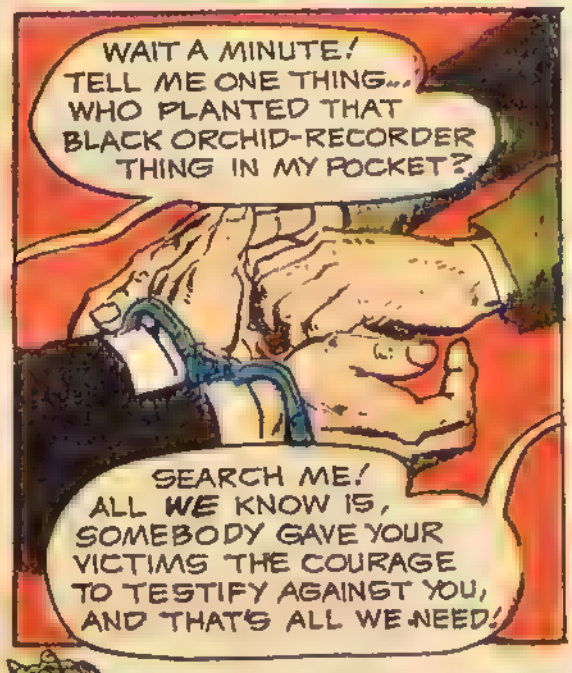
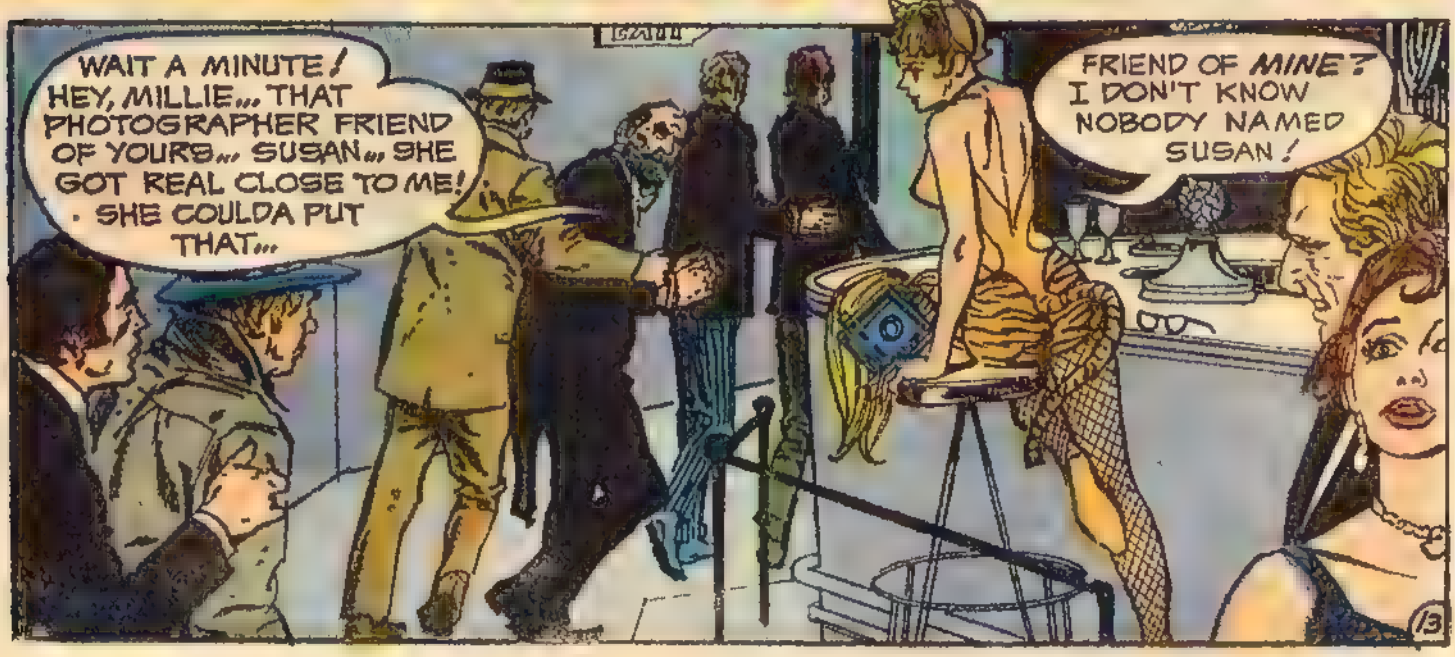
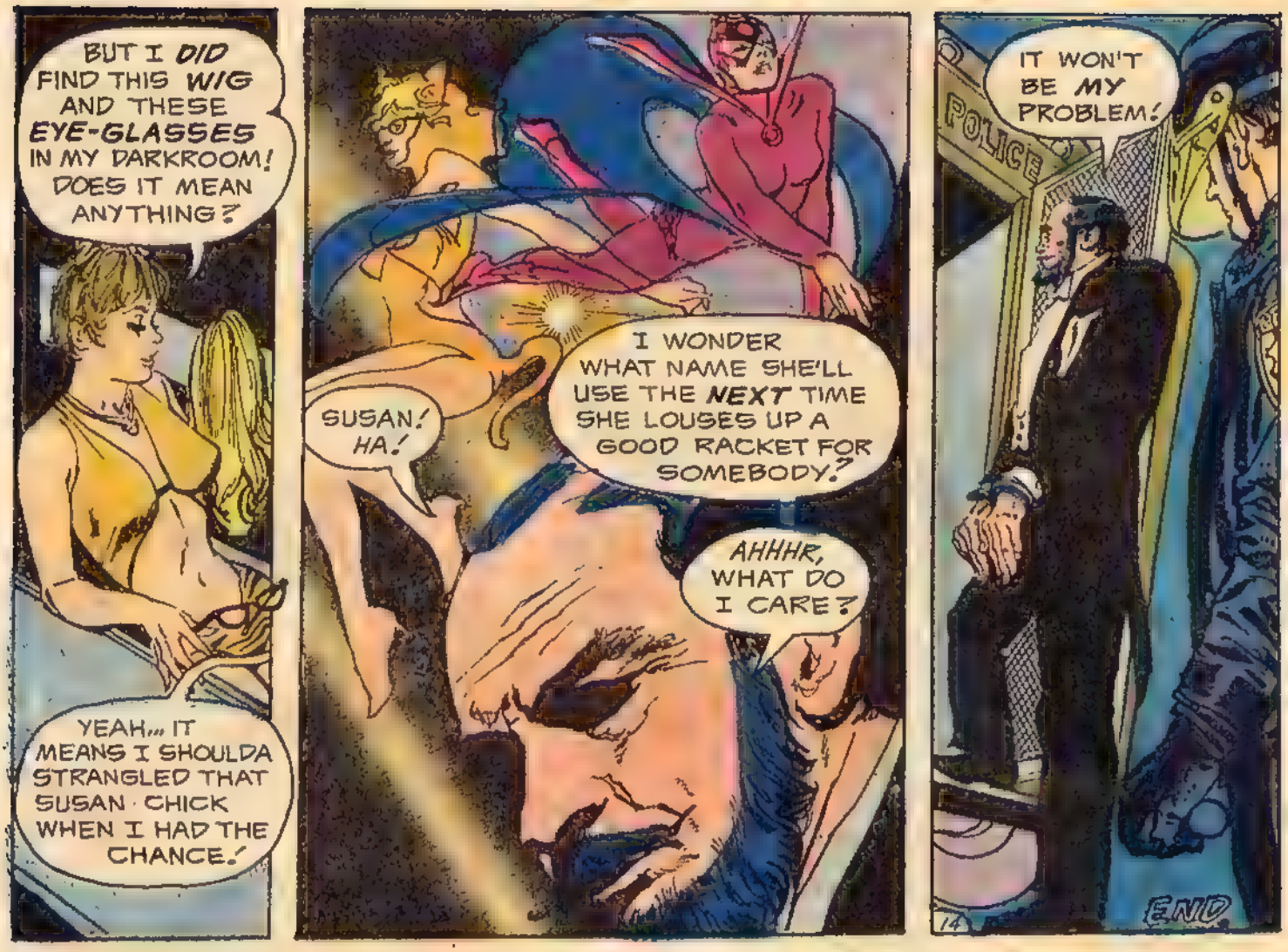

YOU DEED NOT THEENK I COULD REALLY MAKE PEOPLE SEE ME FLY WEETHOUT HALP, DEED YOU? MEBBE SOME HYPNOTEESTS CAN DO ZAT...
...BOT ME... I WORK WEETH WIRES!
JUST A MINUTE... YOU MEAN YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE NICK IS?

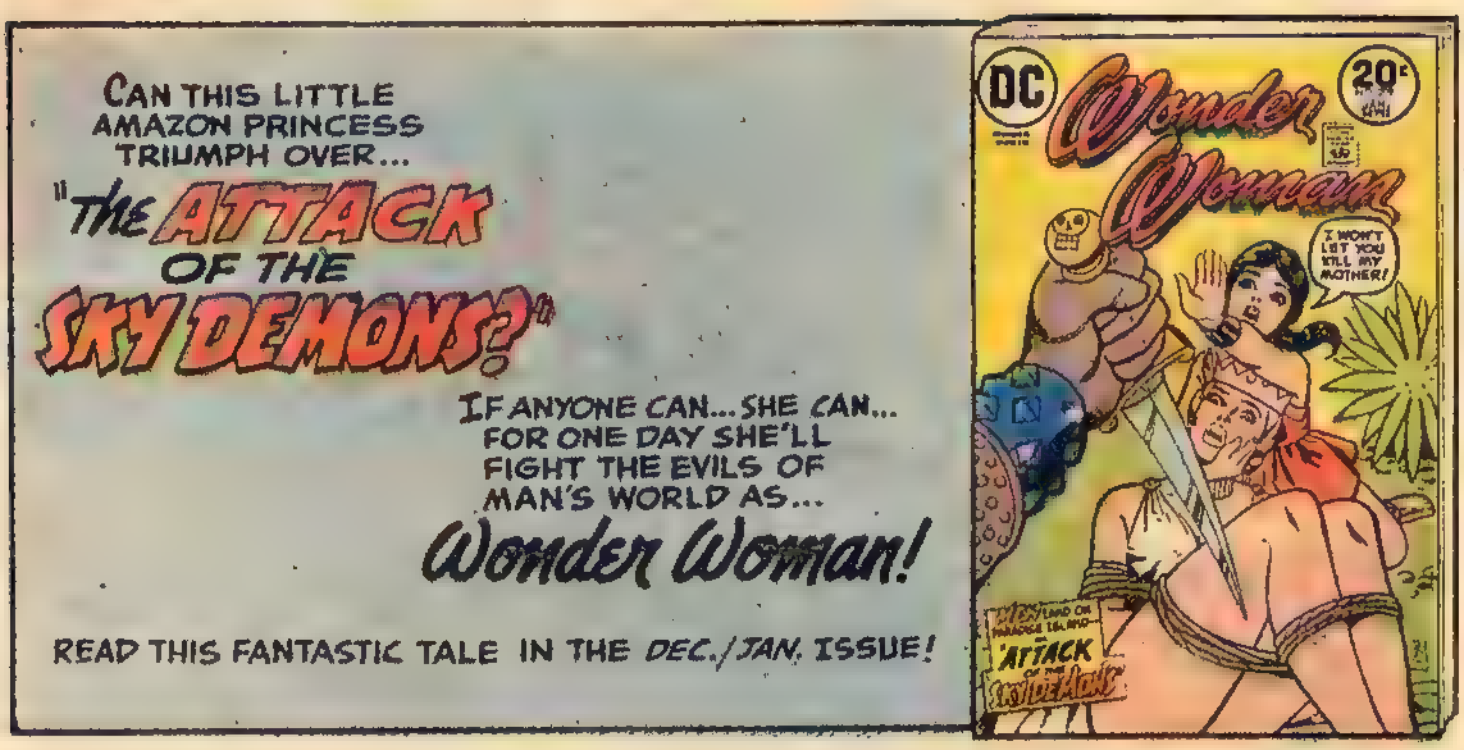
CERTAINLY NOT! AND I DEED NOT PLANT ZAT TAPE-RECORDER-ORCHID EEN HEES POCKET, EITHER! SOMEBODEE ELSE MUST HAVE DONE ZAT!
HEY... HERE'S NICK! WHERE YOU BEEN, BOSS?
QUICK! I GOTTA CALL MY BANK IN SWITZERLAND AND STOP A CHECK!

THERE WON'T BE TIME FOR THAT, NICK! WE'VE GOT A WARRANT FOR YOUR ARREST! EXTORTION... POSSIBLY MURDER! WE'VE GOT LOTS OF HARD EVIDENCE, THANKS TO FIFTY GOOD CITIZENS!


WAIT A MINUTE! TELL ME ONE THING... WHO PLANTED THAT BLACK ORCHID-RECORDER THING IN MY POCKET?
SEARCH ME! ALL WE KNOW IS, SOMEBODY GAVE YOUR VICTIMS THE COURAGE TO TESTIFY AGAINST YOU, AND THAT'S ALL WE NEED!


WAIT A MINUTE! HEY, MILLIE... THAT PHOTOGRAPHER FRIEND OF YOURS... SUSAN... SHE GOT REAL CLOSE TO ME! SHE COULDA PUT THAT...
FRIEND OF MINE? I DON'T KNOW NOBODY NAMED SUSAN!


BUT I DID FIND THIS WIG AND THESE EYE-GLASSES IN MY DARKROOM! DOES IT MEAN ANYTHING?
YEAH... IT MEANS I SHOULDA STRANGLED THAT SUSAN CHICK WHEN I HAD THE CHANCE!
SUSAN! HA!
I WONDER WHAT NAME SHE'LL USE THE NEXT TIME SHE LOUSES UP A GOOD RACKET FOR SOMEBODY?
AHHHR, WHAT DO I CARE?
POLICE
IT WON'T BE MY PROBLEM!
14
END


CAN THIS LITTLE AMAZON PRINCESS TRIUMPH OVER...
"THE ATTACK OF THE SKY DEMONS?"
IF ANYONE CAN... SHE CAN... FOR ONE DAY SHE'LL FIGHT THE EVILS OF MAN'S WORLD AS...
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I WON'T LET YOU KILL MY MOTHER!
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I LOVED HIM BUT... "I WANTED TOO MUCH!"
I BETRAYED MY BEST FRIEND... "I LOVE YOU DOCTOR!"
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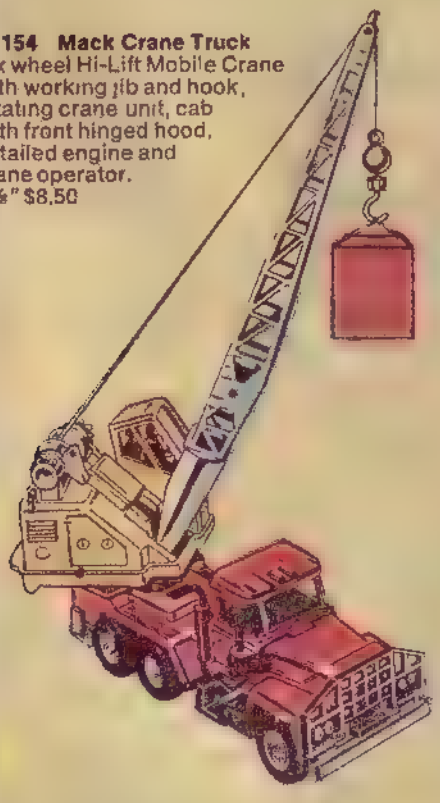

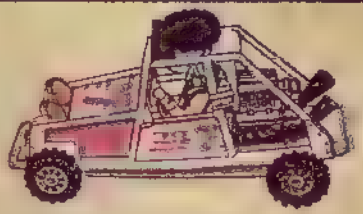

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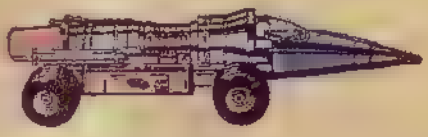

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ADVENTURERS' CLUB Presents...

WHICK! WHOCK! WHICK! WHOCK!

I'LL TELL YOU MY STORY, COLONEL STRONG! BUT THERE IS ONE QUESTION I WILL NOT ANSWER!
THAT'S A BIT UNUSUAL, MR. FRISELLA! HOWEVER--
--LET'S HEAR THE DETAILS AND WE'LL SEE WHAT THE BOARD OF THE ADVENTURERS CLUB HAS TO SAY ABOUT IT LATER!
IT BEGAN FOR ME ABOUT FIVE MONTHS AGO, ON THE UPPER REACHES OF THE AMAZON RIVER! FLOOD WATERS HAD MADE THE RIVER A RAGING CURRENT!
WHUMMMP!
FASTER, JOÃO! PULL HARDER!
TOO LATE, MR. FRISELLA! WE'RE GOING OVER!
STORY: ARNOLD DRAKE
ART: LUIS DOMINGUEZ
J-3124

GREAT FOAMY ARMS REACHED UP TO PULL ME UNDER AND IT WAS ALL I COULD DO TO STAY AFLOAT!
FWOOSH!
I'M STILL NOT SURE HOW I MADE MY WAY TO SHORE...
JOAO IS GONE! I'VE GOT TO FIND MY WAY TO TEST THE DRILLING SITE ALONE!
AS I MADE MY WAY THROUGH THE JUNGLE, I HEARD THAT STRANGE NOISE THAT WAS TO BE MY NEW "GUIDE"...
WHAT'S THAT? THAT CONSTANT RHYTHM! NEVER MISSING A BEAT!
WHICK! WHOCK! WHICK! WHOCK!
DAY AFTER DAY, I FOLLOWED THAT DISTANT RHYTHM UNTIL FATIGUE AND FEVER TOOK THEIR TOLL...
C-C-CAN'T MAKE IT! THIS IS M-MY BURIAL GROUND!
WHICK! WHOCK! WHICK
SHE WAS A PLAIN ENOUGH INDIAN WOMAN, BUT TO MY EYES SHE SEEMED MORE LIKE AN ANGEL!
WH-- WH-- WHERE, AM I? WHO BROUGHT ME HERE?
NOPA TITA! NOPA TITA! CHIMAGA!
2

HE WAS A TALL, NOBLE LOOKING INDIAN, THE ONE THEY CALLED CHIMAGA! THE TRIBAL CHIEFTAIN!
YOU BE WELL SOON! WE TAKE YOU DOWN RIVER TO YOUR PEOPLE!
THANK YOU! ONLY-- WHAT'S THAT SOUND? BEEN HEARING IT FOR DAYS!
WHICK! WHOCK!
THAT IS THE OGURA! THAT HEART OF THE EARTH, BEATING!
WHICK! WHOCK!
AHHHH! SOMETHING YOU WORSHIP! BUT WHAT MAKES THAT SOUND? I HEARD IT MILES AWAY!
IN ANSWER, HE JUST TURNED AND WALKED AWAY! BUT WITH EACH PASSING DAY, MY CURIOSITY MOUNTED!
THREE TIMES A DAY A DIFFERENT GROUP GOES OFF TO THE MOUNTAIN! GOT TO FOLLOW THEM!
WHICK! WHOCK! WHICK! W
THE ANSWER WAS INSIDE A HUGE, NATURAL VAULT! I WAS TOO DUMFOUNDED TO THINK OF HIDING!
WHICK! WHOCK!
WHICK! WHOCK!
A PENDULUM! THE GRAND-DADDY OF 'EM ALL! BUT WHY? WHAT'S IT FOR-- IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS JUNGLE?
3

NOW YOU HAVE SEEN THE OGURA! IT HAS BEEN HERE SINCE BEFORE MY PEOPLE COULD WRITE OUR LANGUAGE! ITS STORY IS HANDED DOWN FROM FATHER TO SON!
WHICK!
BUT WHAT IS IT? WHAT DOES IT DO?
WHOCK!
I HAVE SAID-- IT IS THE HEART OF EARTH! IF OGURA STOPS BEATING-- THE EARTH DIE! MAN FROM CLOUDS GIVE IT TO MY PEOPLE!
"MARTIANS" WHO LANDED HERE THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO? OR JUST A RELIGIOUS LEGEND?
WHICK!
NOW THAT YOU HAVE SEEN OGURA-- WE CANNOT LET YOU GO! YOU BETRAY IT TO OTHERS! THEY STOP THE "HEART" FROM BEATING!
THEY'RE GOING TO HOLD ME HERE-- FOREVER!
WHOCK!
I KNEW THERE WAS ONLY ONE ROAD OPEN TO ME...
DON'T WANT TO DO THIS TO ANOTHER MAN'S RELIGION-- BUT IT'S THAT OR MY NECK!
WHICK!
IT'S SLOWING DOWN! MY WEIGHT IS STOPPING IT! THAT'S GOT TO THROW THE WHOLE TRIBE INTO PANDEMONIUM!
WHOCK!
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING
4

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DC

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I BRACED MYSELF FOR THE BLOW I KNEW WAS COMING...
WHOMP!
THEN, ALERTED BY THE STRANGE SILENCE, ALL THE TRIBE CAME RUNNING...
TAMAKO! SINDI OGURA! SINDI!
HE'S TELLING THEM TO START THE PENDULUM AGAIN! SURE-- OTHERWISE THE WHOLE WORLD WILL FALL APART!
IT WORKED! THEY'RE SO BUSY GETTING THE OGURA GOING AGAIN-- THEY FORGOT ABOUT ME!
THEN, AS I DASHED BACK THROUGH THE VILLAGE...
HOLY HANNAH! THE EARTH-- OPENING UP BEFORE ME!
CRAAAAACK!
I LEAPED ACROSS, A SECOND BEFORE THE DIVIDE WAS BEYOND CROSSING!
HUNNNNNH!

THEN, AS I SCRAMBLED UP THE MOUNTAIN AT THE SOUTHERN END OF THE VILLAGE ...
THE WHOLE MOUNTAIN IS ERUPTING!
BAWHOOOOM!
I STOPPED THE OGURA-- AND THE EARTH TORE ITSELF TO PIECES! WHAT THE DEVIL DOES IT MEAN?
BADOOM
KAWOOM!
WHEN IT WAS SAFE TO MOVE AGAIN, I MADE MY WAY TO THE TOP!
LOOK AT THAT MESS! BUT IT'S STOPPED! THE EARTH HAS STOPPED ERUPTING! AND-- LISTEN!
IT WAS SOFT-- ALMOST A WHISPER-- AT FIRST! THEN IT GREW BOLD AND STEADY AGAIN!
THE OGURA! THEY'VE STARTED IT AGAIN-- AND THE EARTH BECAME SILENT! THE "HEART" BEATS AGAIN!
WHICK WHOCK!
A FASCINATING TALE! BUT TELL ME-- JUST WHERE WAS THIS VILLAGE?
THAT IS THE QUESTION I WILL NOT ANSWER, COLONEL! I'M NOT TAKING ANY CHANCES ON ANYBODY STOPPING THE OGURA AGAIN!
The End

DATELINE: ADVENTURE

J-3232

Dear Joe:

Please keep Adventure exactly as it is, filled with non-series, non-super-hero stories. I do not like Vigilante, especially with Mike Sekowsky art.

The Adventurers' Club is the highlight of each issue. It's fantastic Aparo art combined with excellent stories that does it. Please keep it around.

Captain Fear has improved, and I won't mind seeing it return in a future issue.

I'm looking forward to Deadman in #431 or so, but please don't make him the whole book; keep the Showcase format.

John Cameron, Southfield, Michigan

Dear John,

As a quick glance at the next few letters will show, your opinion about the scripting on The Adventurers' Club is a minority view, so we're retaining Jim Aparo's art on a new series, but sending the old concept back to the mystery mags. The new series? No, unfortunately it isn't going to be Deadman just yet, but we are giving you a ghostly super-hero next issue . . . THE SPECTRE, in all-new stories inspired by the Golden Age character. The back of Adventure will remain filled with irregular super-stars: Captain Fear and The Black Orchid episodes are in progress, for instance. Meanwhile, we anxiously await your response to The Black Orchid, both sales-wise and letter-wise.

* * * * *

Dear Editor:

According to your announcement, brand-new strips were coming to Adventure. Well, here are my verdicts on the series:

I enjoy the Vigilante. I'm glad to see he has been revived, but I hate to have him grace the same pages as that awful Adventurers' Club. That strip would be better off in the House of Mystery, or another one of the "weird" books. It has that kind of style and flavor. If you do want to continue the strip, please move it there.

On the other hand, Captain Fear fits into the format. It could be handled better, but it's all in all a very good strip.

Helmut Schroetter, Appleton, Wisc.

* * * * *

Dear Joe:

Do you know what Adventure #427 was? A mediocre comic book. The only superior thing on it was the cover. It didnt live up to its title and reputation. I suggest that measures be taken right away—The Adventurers' Club and Captain Fear have got to go!

Keith Griffin, Mobile, Alabama

Dear Keith,

In the interests of the equal time provision, let's hear from some fans who'll answer you more emphatically than we could . . .

* * * * *

Dear Joe:

Adventure #427 was a solid issue from cover to cover. I rather liked the first issue, although the cover featuring it was misleading. Jim Aparo is rapidly moving to the top of my list of favorite artists. I think the Vigilante series was good enough to hold its own this issue; it had an over-used plot, but with nice touches. Captain Fear will have to wait before I pass judgment on it. It has all the ingredients of a good strip, but something seems to be lacking that I can't put my finger on.

Most importantly, please make Adventure monthly again!

Jerry Stephan, Bonne Terre, Mo.

* * * * *

Dear Editor:

The winning combo delivered to us in Adventure #426 was repeated in #427 just as I was hoping! Since the departure of Supergirl from this mag's hallowed pages, the comic has skyrocketed to the top of my must buy list. No other publication in the DC line gives us three different stories per issue, much less three such well done ones. Vigilante has always been one of my favorite characters and "The Slaying Town" did him right.

This issue's installment of The Adventurers' Club was well done, but it wasn't the type of story to fit this strip. The concept of some guy being changed into a lizard belongs in The House Of Mystery. The title Adventurers' Club itself indicates a brand of stories which remain credible while being weird.

Captain Fear was well executed, as usual. Perhaps he should be considered for a magazine of his own.

Scott Gibson, Sterling, Colorado

Dear Scott,

All new characters are considered for solo mags, but sometimes it takes a while until they prove themselves. Perhaps Captain Fear will indeed be a magazine one day, but for the time being he's just slated for more issues of Adventure.

* * * * *

Attention readers: This issue's lead story finishes up the Black Orchid's three-issue trial run. If you want to see more of her adventures, either here or in a magazine of her own—WRITE! Your letters help determine the future of all our stars, and in this case, they'll be particularly important. The address for your comments is: DATELINE: ADVENTURE, National Periodical Publications, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, New York 10019.

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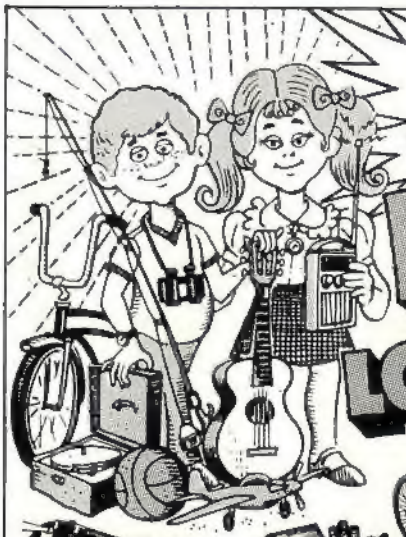

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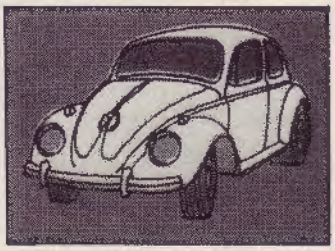

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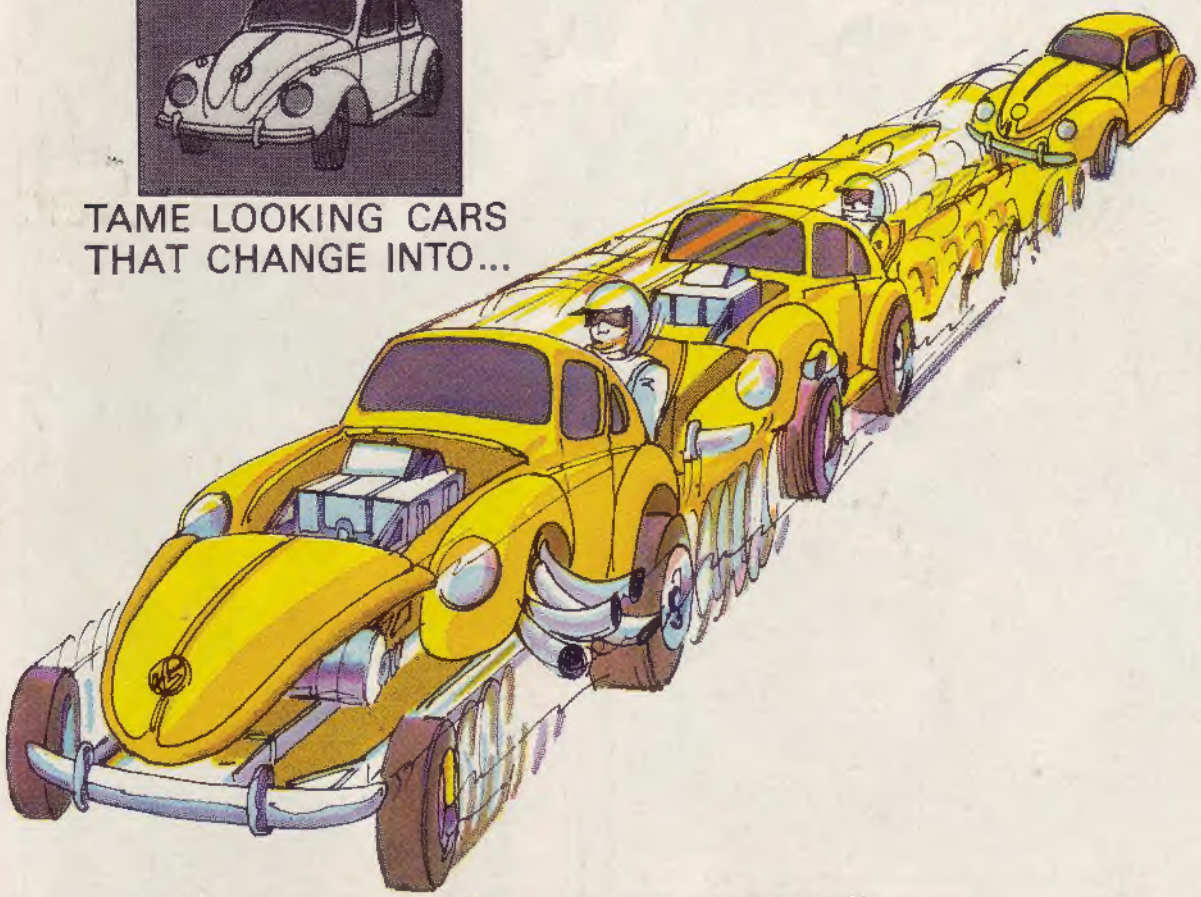

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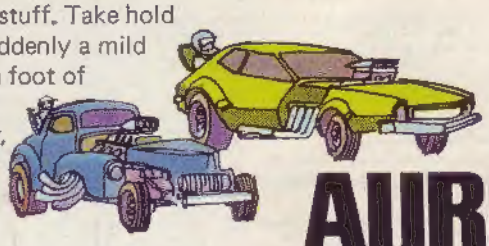

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